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ABSTRACT

Introduced in 1971, the French "Continuing Vocational Training (CVT)" system was designed to promote workers' "socio-professional promotion." The contribution of its induced mobility to the fulfillment of this objective has always been considered as one of its key performance indicators. Outcomes of the CVT over the last 3 decades were examined, using the French National Board for Statistics' successive surveys on Vocational Training and Qualifications. The results confirm the general tendency of an increasing horizontal mobility in the workforce at the expense of a declining promotional mobility (known for its high link with socio-professional promotion). Various groups of employees were identified, from those needing structure to autonomous types dedicated mostly to their own careers. With the old industrial-model hierarchical structures disappearing and being replaced with flat organizations, fewer employees were dedicated to their employers and fewer were able to move into higher socio-professional employment categories. The second section of this paper examines the concomitant change in the dynamics of vocational identity formation processes affecting the performance of the CVT system during the same period. (Contains 27 references.) (KC)

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Induced labour mobility through continuing vocational training: Investigating its development and role in the French context during the last three decades[1]

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ABSTRACT

Formally introduced in 1971, the "Continuing Vocational Training (CVT)" system was specifically designed to promote workers' "socio-professional promotion". The contribution of its induced mobility to the fulfilment of this objective has always been considered as one of its key performance indicators. After an overview of the general structure of the CVT system, the first section of this paper investigates into the development and effect of its induced mobility on the beneficiaries' socio-professional promotion over the last three decades. The results confirm the general tendency of an increasing horizontal mobility at the expense of a declining promotional mobility (known for its high link with socio-professional promotion). The second section of the paper completes this investigation by examining the concomitant change in the dynamics of vocational identity formation processes affecting the performance of the CVT system during the same period.

[1] This paper (as an individual session paper) is a contribution to the preliminary material related to the European project "FAME" which was formally launched on the 1st of March 2000. It is a seven-country study on "vocational identity, flexibility and mobility in the European labour market".

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INTRODUCTION

Since its formal introduction in the early 70s, the Continuing Vocational Training system (CVT) has remained a combination of two basic approaches to work-related learning: employee-self directed CVT and employer-oriented CVT. It was mainly designed to promote, as one of its founding missions and objectives, employees' access to learning, training and "socio-professional promotion". The induced mobility of its beneficiaries is one of the key performance indictors generally used to assess empirically the contribution of the system to the fulfilment of its basic objectives.

On the basis of the INSEE's (The French National Board for Statistics) successive surveys on Vocational Training and Qualifications ("VTQ": enquêtes Formation Qualification Professionnelle: « FQP »), this paper attempts to examine, in the first section, the contribution of CVT system to its beneficiaries' "general socio-professional promotion" through the induced mobility during the last three decades. This will be preceeded by an outline of the general structure of the existing CVT system including a typology of its induced notions of mobility.

The second section of the paper, completes the investigation by exploring the concomitant contextual changes taking place during the same period, in relation to the process of vocational identity development and its influences on working individuals' socio-professional promotion.

I- CVT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS INDUCED MOBILITY

Before investigating into the development of CVT-induced mobility and its effects on its beneficiaries' socio-professional promotion, it is important to start by introducing the general structure of the existing CVT system, and giving a typology of the notions of labour mobility usually used as performance indicators.

1- General structure of the French continuing vocational training system (CVT)

As a complement to initial general and vocational education, the French Continuing Vocational training (CVT) system was specifically introduced and designed to promote continuous access to further learning and training of individuals during their whole working life. It concerns all working individuals, as employees or self-employed, in the private or the public sector, on national and regional levels (cf. M. Dif 1999a; V. Michelet, 1998).
Its intermediary and ultimate objectives are basically:

- The promotion of equal chances for access to further learning and training;
- Contribution to workers' "socio-professional promotion" (such as continuous access to employability, promotions, higher qualifications/wages, functional flexibility and mobility, higher socio-professional status within the organisation);
- Reducing the effects of exclusion initially generated by the selectivity and insufficient learning path- fluidity within the dominant initial education and training system;
- Bridging the gap between learning and production spheres, basically through the promotion and accreditation of work related learning.

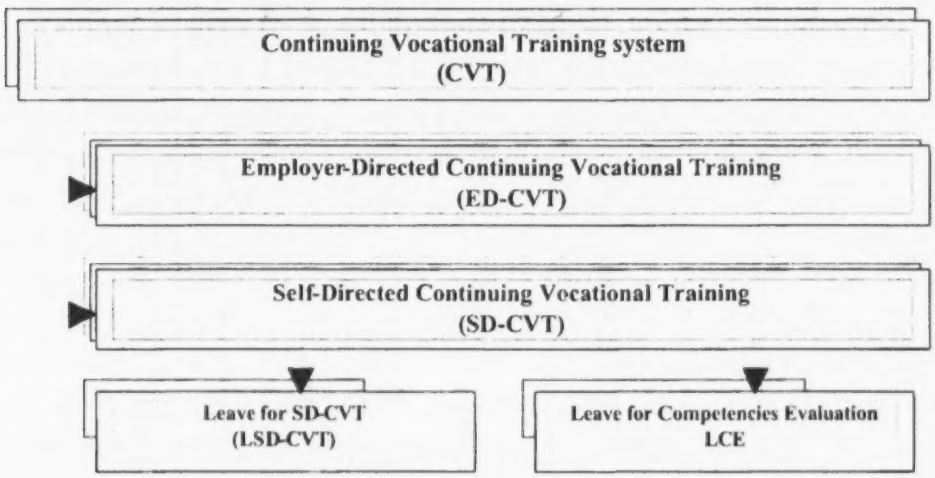
Since its introduction in the early 70s, the CVT system continues to function according to following formal mechanisms, namely:

The obligatory financial contribution of the organisation: It is specific to the French CVT system, that all kinds of organisations have to contribute to its financing. For private companies with at least ten employees this contribution is about 1,5% of their wage bill and 0,25% for those employing less than 10 people. In fact, their real spending on CVT development goes beyond this compulsory contribution. It represented on average in 1996 3,3% of their wage bill (i.e. a little bit over the double of their legal contribution). Their share in the whole spending (on national and regional level) had risen from 53,1% in 1987 to 54,7% at the end of 1996. Within the public sector, this contribution varies, according to the nature of the organisation and its adopted training scheme, between 0,10% and 3,8% of the wage bill on average. Their contribution on national level, which represented 45,5% of the whole spending on CVT, had declined to 43,7% in 1996 (cf. V. Michelet, 1998). These contributions are generally collected by a special type of collecting institutions called OPCA (Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agréés) created and run by the social partners. This collector network is represented by 99 OPCA: 49 are sector collectors on the national level and 50 are exclusively inter-professional regional collectors.

The employees' access to CVT is either employer-directed or employee-directed learning: Since its formal introduction in the early 70s, CVT system has remained a combination of two basic approaches to learning (cf. figure 1 below)):

- Employer-directed continuing vocational training (ED-CVT);
- Employee-self initiated and directed continuing vocational training (SD-CVT).

Figure 1: French Continuing vocational Training system: the general structure



The employer-directed continuing vocational training system (ED-CVT) is the most dominating component within the CVT system in terms of training flows and financial resources used. It is planned and implemented within the organisation's vocational training scheme, which includes all kinds of short and medium term vocational training programmes aiming generally at the promotion of internal labour flexibility and mobility.

As an employee's choice and a preference guided system, the employee self-directed continuing vocational training (SD-CVT) is usually carried out through two main formally institutionalised vocational training regimes: Leave for self-directed CVT (LSD-CVT) and leave for competencies evaluation (LCE) (cf. M. Dif, 1999a et 1999d).

The LSD-CVT ("CIF") regime was specifically designed to allow any worker, during his or her working life, to take a paid leave to pursue, independently of the organisation's training scheme, a self initiated and directed training project. It was extended in 1991 to take into consideration the case of precariously employed individuals. As a promoter of free choice and equal chance for access to learning of all the organisation's employees, the training chosen according to this regime can be vocational with a variety of ultimate aims such as the promotion of the worker's flexibility and mobility within the organisation or just a punctual adaptation to changes in technology and labour market structures. The leave can also be for non-vocational learning purposes with the aim of allowing the beneficiary to acquire general qualifications and/or get more involved in the social and cultural life. It is financed through the employer's compulsory contribution of 0,20% of the wage bill, collected and run, since 1984, by an independent parity organism called OPACIF.

As for the LCE ("CBC"), it allows its beneficiaries with a minimum working experience (of 5 years, of which one year at least was with the last employer) to restate clearly their own carrier projects in the light of a thorough vocational and personal competencies evaluation programme. As is the case with the LSD-CVT regime, the LCE beneficiary has the same kind of guarantees given by the LSD-CVT regime such as free choice, equal access and funding. Moreover, it is adaptable to the individuals employment status: permanent, limited duration or temporary employment.

2- Typology of the notions of mobility used as performance indicators

Labour mobility is basically an induced concept. It is generally considered one of the consequences of:

- The phenomena of flexibility-based new modes of organisation and human resource management, globalisation and the accelerated rhythm of technological change during the last three decades or so;
- Related change in the process of identity formation and development (on individual and collective levels);
- The instrumental use of VET in general and CVT in particular.

In a French context, this concept is traditionally used a key performance indicator to evaluate the contribution of continuing education and training to "social promotion" (i.e. its contribution to the promotion of individuals' access to employment, learning, training and socio-professional promotion in general).

Three basic types of labour mobility are observable in the French context: *Socio-professional, vertical (or hierarchical)* and *horizontal* mobility (cf. G.Podevin, 1998; C. Dubar & G.Podevin, 1990):

- "***Socio-professional mobility***" or simply "***social promotion***" consists of working individuals' passage from one socio-professional category to a higher level. The socio-professional categories are generally defined within the framework of a formal nomenclature of professions and social categories (PCS: Professions et Catégories Sociales) by grouping working individuals into the following basic groups: non-qualified

workers (NQW or ONQ), qualified workers (QW or OQ), employees, technicians and supervisors, engineers and executives. In general, their socio-professional promotion is empirically determined by comparing the initial (first employment) situation of each group to other subsequent situations. Therefore, it is included, as well, in this process the phenomena of counter-mobility and caught-up redeployment.

- ***"Vertical (or hierarchical) mobility"*** when there is a promotion to a higher employment position requiring higher qualifications within the same socio-professional category. The latter is generally considered as a prerequisite for access to a higher level of professional mobility and socio-professional promotion in general. This type of mobility, called alternatively hierarchical (upward/downward) mobility, is empirically observed through the respondent answer to the following question: Will this training allow you, when it is completed, to have access to a new job/responsibility with higher/lower qualifications or a higher/lower hierarchical position than before? The vertical mobility thus determined can be either upward hierarchical mobility, downward hierarchical mobility or no mobility at all.
- ***"Horizontal mobility"*** concerns the individual's movement between jobs with more or less equivalent levels of qualifications and responsibilities, usually within the same socio-professional category. This movement can be within the same firm in the case of "*Internal labour mobility*" and between firms in the case of "*external labour mobility*".

For empirical and analytical purposes, they are usually grouped into two basic categories: *promotional mobility* and *occupational (professional) mobility.*

- The "***promotional mobility***" is generally a combination of both: the socio-professional mobility and the hierarchical mobility.
- As for the term "***occupational or professional mobility***", it is usually used when vertical mobility and horizontal mobility are looked at as one type of mobility. Within the latter case, there is generally a distinction between: CVT-induced internal mobility and CVT-induced external mobility.

3- Development and effects of CVT-induced promotional mobility

In spite of the efforts put into its development during the last three decades, the CVT system did not contribute, as effectively as it was expected, to its beneficiaries' "socio-professional promotions" in terms of promotional mobility. If the proportion of the latter represented 20% of CVT-beneficiaries in the early 70s, it had, generally gone down during the 90s to an average level oscillating between 12% and 15% (cf. G. Podevin, 1998).

This result is, on the whole, confirmed by two sources of data (cf. C. Dubar and G. Podevein, 1990):

- Employers' (with at least 10 employees) declarations about their compulsory financial contribution to CVT and alternating vocational training financing, i.e. "declaration 2483" treated by CEREQ (e.g., Céreq 1989).
- INSEE's (French National Board for Statistics) successive sample surveys on vocational training and qualifications ("VTQ" or FQP: enquêtes Formation Qualifications Professionnelles, e.g: 1970, 1977, 1985, 1993).

In general, both sources agree on the fact that access to CVT and promotions are to a certain extent determined by structural factors such as the size of the company, its organisational structure and mode of human resource management in relation to the nature of its sector:

- Sectors with a relatively high link between access to CVT and promotional mobility, such as steel transformation, chemistry, electronics and aeronautics. Even if the promotional flow does not exceed, on average, 3% of beneficiary employees every year, the important spending on CVT has always been accompanied by a significant rate of internal promotions within the established hierarchies of socio-professional categories.
- By contrast, sectors with less spending on CVT such as hotels, restaurants and private services to households, are generally characterised by low internal promotional mobility.

If this is generally the case on sector level, is there any significant link between access to CVT and promotional mobility on the individual level? The INSEE's successive sample surveys on vocational training and qualifications (VTQ) are the only sources available for investigation on this level. Thus, the observed link between access to CVT and promotional mobility seems to be in general lower on individual organisation level than on a sector level. This is basically due to structural differences, implying that not all organisations, within sectors generally characterised by a relatively high level of access to CVT and induced promotional mobility, possess exactly the same character. For instance, even in the nationalised public sector known for its high CVT induced promotional mobility, the rate of CVT induced promotional mobility in general and CVT induced hierarchical (upward) mobility in particular, did not go beyond one third during the first half of the 80s (cf. C. Dubar and G. Podevein, 1990).

However, in terms of the last two surveys treated by Céreq (***CE***ntre for ***RE***search on ***Q***ualifications), a distinction can be established between two cases of induced promotional mobility data (cf. C. Dubar and G. Podevein, 1990; F. Berton & G. Podevin, 1991, G.podevin, 1998, M. Dif, 1999a and 1999d):

- The case of declining ED-CVT induced promotional mobility;
- The case of increasing SD-CVT induced promotional mobility.

Declining ED-CVT induced promotional mobility:

A decade after the CVT introduction, the beneficiaries of a ED-CVT induced "socio-professional mobility" (13,8%) were about the double of those who got the same kind of promotions but without any prior access to any CVT. During the first half of the 90s, the proportion of the beneficiaries of this type of induced mobility had gone down to 12,1%, while that of non-CVT beneficiaries increased up to 8,5%. The decline of ED-CVT induced "socio-professional mobility" had apparently touched most of non-qualified workers' promotion to the category of qualified workers (cf. table 1).

Table 1: ***Development of ED-CVT induced promotional mobility***

	Non CVT induced socio-professional mobility		Induced socio-professional mobility		Induced hierarchical upward mobility	
	1980-85	1988-93	1980-85	1988-93	1980-85	1988-93
All socio-professional categories	**6,7%**	**8,5%**	**13,8%**	**12,1%**	**25,1%**	**8,0%**
Non-qualified workers	19,6%	24,2%	55,4%	42,0%	27,5%	10,9%
Qualified workers	3,7%	5,2%	12,9%	16,7%	24,9%	10,3%
Employees	4,6%	6,4%	14,2%	17,5%	31,2%	10,1%
Technicians	6,4%	8,0%	9,3%	8,1%	25,8%	6,3%
Engineers and executives	-	-	-	-	21,5%	5,8%

Source: INSEE's sample surveys on VTQ (1980-85) and (1988-93) treated by Céreq.

The deterioration of ED-CVT induced hierarchical upward mobility was even higher during the same period. Its decline from 25,1% in the early 80s to only 8% during the first half of the 90s touched, to a variable degree, all socio-professional categories in general and the category of employees in particular (cf. table 1).

Increasing SD-CVT induced promotional mobility:

In terms of its contribution to the development of the promotional mobility over the same period, the overall performance of SD-CVT is relatively higher than that of the ED-CVT. This is in spite of its lower weight in terms of output and financial resources used. In fact, the situation was reversed in the case of its induced socio-professional mobility which had gone up from 16,9% in the early 80s to 20,2% of the total number of SD-CVT beneficiaries during the first half of the 90s. With the slight exception of technicians, engineers and executives, all the other socio-professional categories benefited from this improved situation, especially workers: about 7 out of non-qualified SD-CVT beneficiaries were promoted to qualified workers (cf. table 2 below).

As for SD-CVT induced hierarchical (upward) mobility, in spite of its overall decline for all socio-professional categories by about 50% on average, its link with SD-CVT is still higher than in the case of ED-CVT induced vertical mobility (cf. table 2).

Table 2: ***Development of SD-CVT induced promotional mobility***

	Induced socio-professional mobility		Induced hierarchical upward mobility	
	1980-85	1988-93	1980-85	1988-93
All socio-professional categories	**16,9%**	**20,2%**	**21,2%**	**11,0%**
Non-qualified workers	58,3%	66,8%	21,1%	12,7%
Qualified workers	14,0%	26,0%	36,3%	15,3%
Employees	15,6%	26,9%	25,8%	9,2%
Technicians	14,3%	14,0%	25,0%	12,2%
Engineers and executives	-	-	22,5%	13,9%

Source: INSEE's sample surveys on VTQ (1980-85) and (1988-93) treated by Céreq.

4- CVT-induced occupational mobility:

Its development:

The link between CVT and the induced "occupational mobility" (horizontal and vertical) has undergone an important decline over the last three decades. Twenty five years after the CVT formal introduction, there were about 64,5% of SD-CVT beneficiaries and 87,4% of trainees within ED-CVT programmes, to declare no change in their occupations in terms of vertical and horizontal mobility had been obtained. In fact, it was observed within the rare case of those whose employment situation had really been changing, an increasing proportion of induced horizontal occupational mobility. The ratio of the latter to induced vertical mobility had effectively gone up from 6,1% in the early 70s to 40,2% in the mid-nineties in the case of ED-CVT, and from 12,7% in 1970 to 57,7% at the end of 1993 as far as SD-CVT was concerned (cf. table 3).

This change within the occupational mobility in favour of horizontal mobility, is evidently linked to the organisational changes within firms. The emerging models for human resource management and development within these organisations are more motivated by the rationale of economic efficiency and competitiveness than with the socio-professional promotion of its working members. A flexibility-based model usually called the "post-taylorian" model founded basically on the reduction of pyramidal hierarchies (and hence vertical mobility) and the development of new forms of technico-organisational and functional flexibility-mobility (cf. M. Dif, 2000a; G. Podevin, 1998).

Table 3: ***Development of CVT induced occupational mobility***

INSEE's successive sample surveys on vocational training and qualifications	ED-CVT induced occupational mobility				SD-CVT induced occupational mobility			
	Horizontal mobility (a)	Vertical mobility (b)	No declared mobility	Ratio (a)/(b)	Horizontal mobility (a)	Vertical mobility (b)	No declared mobility	Ratio (a)/(b) %
VTQ 70	3,4%	55,4%	39,2%	6,1%	4,1%	32,2%	-	12,7%
VTQ 77	5,9%	33,6%	49,9%	17,6%	4,4%	29,6%	54,8%	14,9%
VTQ 85	8,7%	25,1%	65,0%	34,7%	6,7%	21,2%	57,2%	31,6%
VTQ 93	3,5%	8,7%	87,4%	40,2%	6,4%	11,1%	64,5%	57,7%

Source: INSEE's sample surveys on VTQ treated by Céreq.

Its effects:

The observed effects of CVT development on its beneficiaries' level of responsibilities and working conditions, qualifications and salaries are more related to the induced form of occupational mobility: vertical or horizontal.

Its effects on the beneficiaries' responsibilities and working conditions:

First, among all CVT beneficiaries declaring no change in their employment situation (i.e., no occupational mobility), 45,5% out of them could however benefit from improved working conditions. For the rest , only the luckiest of them, representing about 7,3%, could have access to higher responsibility positions.(cf. table 4)

Secondly, within the case of a declared change in the employment position (i.e., the case CVT-induced horizontal mobility), an important difference was observed between two basic types of occupational mobility: an *external mobility* when the movement concerns changing employers and *internal mobility* if the change is taking place within the same firm. Within the latter case (i.e., internal occupational mobility) 55% of employees concerned benefit from an increased responsibility, against only 24,4% with improved working conditions. But, in the case of external occupational mobility, 35% of CVT beneficiaries have access to a higher responsibility and 33% of them could get their working conditions relatively improved (cf. table 4).

Thirdly, when the CVT induced occupational mobility is the result of a job promotion (as an internal vertical mobility), it is not surprising to find out that 71,1% of CVT beneficiaries declare their real access to a higher level of responsibility and qualifications, but only 18,3% of them benefit at the same time from an improvement in their working conditions (cf. table 4).

Table 4: ***CVT effects on its beneficiaries responsibilities and working conditions through the induced occupational mobility during the priod:1988-93***

CVT Induced occupational mobility and its effects	Increased responsibility	Improved work conditions	Other effects	No effects
No mobility	7,3%	45,5%	7,9%	39,3%
External mobility	35,0%	33,0%	13,5%	18,6%
Internal mobility:	55,0%	24,4%	6,2%	14,4%
- Vertical	*71,1%*	*18,3%*	*2,8%*	*7,7%*
- Horizontal	*23,8%*	*35,2%*	*12,2%*	*28,8%*

Source: INSEE's sample survey on VTQ (1988-93) treated by Céreq.

Its effects on the beneficiaries' wages and qualifications

By contrast, only 23% of those who were (voluntarily or involuntarily) living a CVT induced horizontal occupational mobility could get access to a higher level of responsibility and qualifications. In fact, the low compensations offered to those employees who after their completed training find themselves moving between equivalent jobs, is confirmed by the low level of their wage. Only 15% of them could benefit from a wage increase compared to 81% of those whose training allowed them to have access to upward hierarchical mobility within the firm (cf. table 5 below).

Table 5: ***CVT effects on its beneficiaries' wages and qualifications through the induced occupational mobility during the priod:1988-93***

	Increased	Stable	Reduced
Vertical mobility	81,0%	17,1%	1,9%
Horizontal mobility	15,0%	78,2%	6,8%

Source: INSEE's sample survey on VTQ (1988-93) treated by Céreq.

II- CONCOMITANT CONTEXTUAL CHANGE IN THE PROCESS OF IDENTITY FORMATION AND ITS EFFECT

In addition to continuing access to learning and training, the individual's socio-professional promotion is highly determined by the mode of identity formation and development over time and space. Since the introduction of the CVT system in the early 70s, the process of "vocational"[3] identity formation has undergone an important structural change. This coincides

[3] The related term "vocation" used here is rather controversial and subject to many interpretation even within the same country. In France, for instance, it has four basic meanings depending on its context ual use (cf.: C. Dubar and P. Tripier, 1998: *Sociologie des professions*, Armand Colin, Paris):

- First meaning is equivalent to a declaration, i.e. the "declared profession" by the individual as it is the case in a population census. In this sense, it is more or less closer to the term "calling" (i.e., vocation) in English or to the German term "Beruf".
- Second meaning is equivalent to an "occupation" for living: a paid for occupation. In this sense, it is equivalent to what usually appears, for instance, on any working individual's pay-slip (engineer, doctor, researcher, specialised worker, ...).
- Third meaning is equivalent to a "speciality" in a profession (e.g., sociologist, economist, minor,...).
- Fourth meaning is equivalent to a "function" or a "mission" within an organisation or in a group (e.g. project manager, a team co-ordinator, ...).

with the end of the Fordist economy and the advent of the new economy based on globalisation and flexibility paradigm (cf. M. Dif 1998 & 1999a).

For the period of sustained economic growth with a relatively low rate of unemployment (1965-1975) Renaud Sainsaulieu conducted an important empirical investigation into work related identity formation processes, based on 200 interviews and 8,000 questionnaires, covering all categories of employees of public and private companies within different sectors such as electricity production and supply (EDF), railway transport (SNCF), insurance, chemistry, food and mechanical industries. He identified four models for identity formation at work: "fusion", "negotiation", "affinities" and "retreat" models (cf. R. Sainsaulieu, 1977, 1985, 1994, 1996 & 1997).

The first model is a ***"fusion"*** or a "community"- based relationship model, which concerns basically specialised workers. Within this model, the collective identity is considered as a refuge and protection against divergences and clashes. The relationship between its members are more founded on affection, solidarity and co-operation than on conflict. For the survival of the group, the existence of a hierarchical authority (a chief or a leader) is crucial for guidance and mediation in cases of conflict.

By contrast, the ***"negotiation"*** type of vocational identities, specific to professional employees and executives, is based on the acceptance of differences and the use of negotiation and open democratic debate to solve any situation of conflict. The members of this collective identity refuse any imposed hierarchical authority. They rather prefer a leader who imposes himself or herself through work and mediation within the group. Moreover, they are highly attached to their profession and autonomy.

As for the ***"affinities"*** identity, it is changing over time due to a high socio-professional mobility of its members. It includes self-directed learners (technicians and executives) within professions which are undergoing rapid change. The interpersonal relationships within the groups are selective and affective. The chief is accepted only as project promoter. The group leader is considered as a hindrance to individual socio-professional promotion.

Finally, the identity of ***"retreat"***, concerns those individuals who use work as an instrument to benefit from or to have access to another type of life, such as family life, leisure, etc. It includes as well the excluded employees (or on the margin of exclusion) such as non-qualified or less qualified workers, near retirement employees and other categories of employees who are marginalised because of their employment status, their ethnic origins or simply because of the nature of their educational and training background. Within these atomised identities where leadership is not looked for, a strong hierarchical authority is needed for co-ordination.

These models of work related identities are formed during the period of a high economic growth, accompanied with a relatively low rate of unemployment. They are basically applicable within companies functioning according to the Fordist model. Twenty years later this typology had to adapt to the requirement of the new economy (the post-fordist economy). By the end of the 80s, R. Sainsaulieu *et al* adapted and extended these models of vocational identities, through a multidimensional study covering 296 socio-professional groups identified within a set of 81 companies' monographs from all sectors of the economy (cf. I. Frankfort, F.Osty , R. Sainsaulieu & M. Uhald, 1995).

In the light of the results of this investigation, Sainsaulieu's four forms of vocational identity were adapted and extended by taking into consideration simultaneously two types of interactivity: sociability (i.e., relational interactivity) and mode of interactivity with work (against interactivity through the established rules and regulations within the organisation). The observed developments are as follows (cf. figure 2):

- The decline of the ***"fusion" type of identities*** and its development into a ***community form of identities*** whose members are highly attached to colleagues, their formally established professional status and working conditions within the organisation. It concerns all categories of employees accumulating a long working experience (generally over 15 years) within public and private organisations belonging basically to the traditional activity sectors which are undergoing important organisational and structural changes as it is the case in steel and car industries, banking and transport sectors. As a result, these communities which are traditionally based on a high level of collective solidarity and relational interactivity, are breaking down into micro groups and classes.

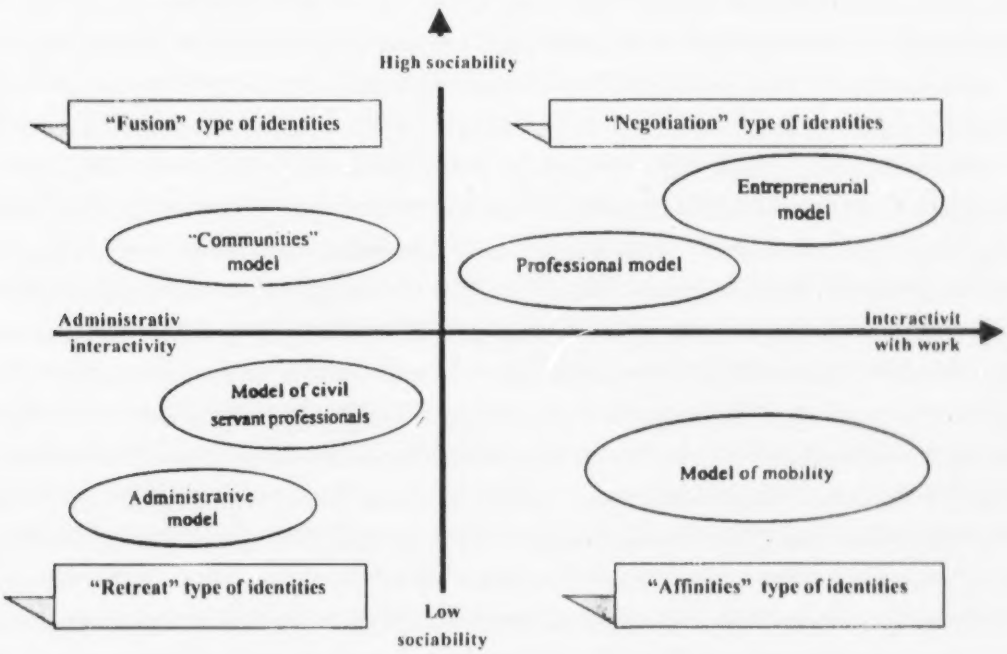
- As for the ***"retreat" identity,*** it is developing in two ways. The first development is simply an extension of the same "retreat" type of identities to what Sainsaulieu called ***"the administrative model"*** to include a new category of employees made of individuals destabilised by technological change and threat of exclusion. They use the routine of the established administrative rules and regulations as means of protection against change and potential risk of exclusion. Half-way between the original "retreat" model and its extension to the administrative model, the second development consists of the emergence of a completely new category of employees in a direct link with clients and more active in counselling within the developing public sector. They call themselves "the civil servant professionals" i.e. ***"the model of civil servant professionals"***.

- The adaptation of the ***"negotiators' model"*** of vocational identities to include two more or less related developments characterised by a high level of both relational and work-based interactivity. The first development takes into consideration the emergence of what Sainsaulieu calls "the professionals" in fields closely linked to the development of new technologies i.e., the ***"model of professionals"***. They are highly attached to comradeship values based on a well done job, autonomy, apprenticeship, trustworthiness and solidarity between members of the profession. This can be interpreted as an indicator of "re-professionalisation" of industrial work. The second development, within the general framework of "negotiators' model of identity formation, concerns the emergence of a new dynamic category of working individuals (managers, executives, sellers, ...) who possess the competencies which allow them to invest in change, in collective mobilisation and to be, at the same time, highly integrated within the organisation as a whole. Sainsaulieu baptised this new form of vocational identity as the ***"entrepreneurial model"*** or simply the "corporate identity" model.

- Finally, the ***"affinities model "*** of vocational identities has developed since the 70s into what Sainsaulieu called the ***"model of mobility"*** of identity formation, based on a combination of a high level of interactivity with work and low sociability. As a result of an increased scarcity of job promotional opportunities due to development of flexibility-based mode of human resource management within companies with more flat organisational structures, a new generation of dynamic and "mobile" workers (specialised technicians, executives, young graduates) has emerged during the last three decades.

They are more inclined to secure their socio-professional promotion through a project-based personal strategies founded on occupational flexibility-mobility. Their relational network investment is primarily oriented towards the achievement of their personal career projects than those of the group or the organisation.

Figure 2: ***Sainsaulieu's forms of vocational identities and their models***



Moreover, on the basis of three empirical investigations conducted by three different research groups during the 80s[4], Claude Dubar confirmed in different terms the same evolutionary four forms of vocational identities (identified by Renaud Sainsaulieu, 1977, 1985, 1995 & 1996). By adopting an inductive analytical approach, he explained the individual's vocational identity formation as a process of double transactions: biographical and relational transactions (cf. C. Dubar, 1991, 1994 & 1998; C. Dubar & S. Engrand, 1991).

The "biographical transaction" refers to time-dependent individual's identity formation by "negotiating with oneself" (identity for oneself) and planning his or her professional trajectory

[4] The investigations used and confronted to each other by C. Dubar include:
- First field investigation was related to the "socio-vocational inclusion programme" launched in1982 concerning unemployed young school leavers without qualifications (degrees) at Nord-Pas-de-Calais (France) (cf. C. Dubar *et al*, 1987: *L'autre jeunesse- Jeunes stagiairs sans diplôme*, Lille, Presses Universitaires de Lille).
- Second field investigation was conducted between 1984 and 1995. It concerned a CVT programme oriented towards employees' career development within two production units of thermal electricity of EDF (cf. C. Dubar and S. Engrand, 1996: *La formation en entreprise comme processus de socialisation: l'example de la production nucléaire à EDF*, in Formation Emploi, n°16, pp.37-47).
- Third field investigation which was completed during the period 1986-89, concerned CVT policies and practice within "innovating" firms in terms of new modes of labour organisation, training and human resources management (cf. M. Bel, C. Dubar and P. Méhaut, 1986: *Les innovations en matière de formation*, in Actualité de la Formation Permanente, n°26, pp.66-84).

as a continuous recreation of the past or as a succession of discontinuities. The "relational transaction" concerns the individual's relational interactivity with the members of "a given space of identification" structured by a set of rules and ethics.

Both transactions are heterogeneous and necessarily interrelated. They are heterogeneous due to the different nature of their dimensions. As a "subjective" and time-dependent dimension, the biographical transaction brings into play the continuity/discontinuity aspects of the individual's socio-professional trajectory and sense of belonging/commitment. By contrast, the relational aspect of the transaction triggers off, as an "objective" space dimension, the process of recognition/non-recognition. The "positions" claimed by the two types of transactions are interrelated in the sense that through interactivity (negotiation, adjustment and compromise), the outcome of each type of transaction is dependent on that of the other, i.e. the individual's success in his or her socio-professional trajectory is partly determined by the judgement of the others (the members of the space of identification) who generally base their judgement on the manner in which the individual makes use of his or her biographical capacities.

Then in terms of this double transaction model and by a synthetic reinterpretation of the results obtained through the three empirical investigation referred to above, C. Dubar identified four forms of vocational identities basically similar to those identified earlier by R. Sainsaulieu but under different names (cf. table 6):

- A biographical transaction founded on continuity (within and between generations) allows employees (young and adults) to construct their own vocational trajectories according to the mode of continuous progression. When their claim for progression is recognised within the organisation and if the relational transaction with the employer and/or the hierarchical authority is favourable, we can speak of the existence of a ***"corporate identity"*** as a principal space of socio-professional identification. It is *equivalent to Sainsaulieu's "negotiators' identity"*. The individuals concerned (employees, technicians and executives) consider themselves as members of the organisation and can easily adapt to its new policies of human resource management (based on flexibility and mobility). But, when the desired stability or progression in a given speciality or a vocation does not gain any favourable recognition, the identity formed will be a ***"categorical identity"*** as a socio-professional space of reference for individuals who are forced to identify themselves with a vocational category at odds with the dominant mode of human resource management. As the biographical and relational transactions are not positively coinciding in this type of identities, the individuals' vocational identification is blocked. This is why it is alternatively called the ***"blockage identity"***. It corresponds to the case of *Sainsaulieu's declining "communities" or "fusion"-based model of identity.*

- A biographical transaction based on a succession of intra and intergenerational discontinuities forces a certain category of employees to try to construct their vocational trajectories without referential sense of belonging (to a particular profession and/or institution). If they succeed in getting recognition for their formal qualifications (degrees) and/or creating useful professional links, they form a ***"network identity"*** (identité de réseau) as means for further qualifications and socio-professional promotion. It *corresponds to Sainsaulieu's "identity of affinities" and its development to the "model of mobility"*. By contrast, for non-qualified individuals (i.e. without degrees) and/or professional links, job instability and the threat of marginalisation and exclusion are becoming increasingly high due to unfavourable changes in the mode of human resource

management and labour market functioning. They are forced in the end to identify themselves with a socially undervalued non-professional sphere. In this case where the biographical transaction is continuously structured in discontinuities, reinforced by the persistence of negative relational transactions, the individuals are progressively pushed to internalise the ***"identity of exclusion"*** called alternatively by Dubar ***"outside work identity"***, which practically *corresponds to Sainsaulieu's "identity of retreat".*

Table 6: ***Forms of vocational identifies according to Dubar's double transaction model***

Forms of identities		Relational "transaction"	
		Recognition	***Non-recognition***
Biographical "transaction"	***Continuity***	**Corporate identity** ***(Promotional identity)*** *Equivalenet to Sainsaulieu's "negotiators" or "entrepreneurial" model of identity.* - Diversity of training and employment strategies (16-20 years old); - Active and adapted employees; - Internal promotion (within innovating organisations)	**Categorical identity** ***(Blockage identity)*** *Equivalent to Sainsaulieu's "fusion" or community model of identity)* - Instrumentalisation of work (16-20 years old)); - Passive but adapted employees; - Blockage (within innovating organisations)
	Discontinuity	**Network identity** ***(Identity of independence)*** *Equivalent to Sanisaulieu's identity of "affinities and mobility".* - Certification to start with (16-20 years old) - Active but non adapted employees; - External mobility (within innovating organisations)	**Outside work identity** ***(Identity of exclusion)*** *Equivalent to Sainsaulieu's identity of "retreat".* - No professional future (16-20 year old) - Passive and non-adapted employees; - Threat of exclusion (within innovating organisations)

Moreover, in the context of the dynamics of identity transformation during the last three decades, CVT has been used as an instrumental means of *differentiation*, *confirmation*, *preservation*, *recuperation* and *flexibility* (cf. J.-M. Barbier, 1996):

- ***Differentiation*** for individuals who already possess a positive image of themselves and are determined to continue improving their socio-professional situation by personal investment through CVT.

- ***Confirmation*** concerns individuals who are looking for social recognition and legitimatisation of their socio-professional itineraries.

- ***Preservation*** for employees who feel threatened by the risk of unemployment or and exclusion and use CVT as means of defence to conserve their existing jobs and status.

- ***Recuperation*** for individuals who are undervalued and/or marginalised in their socio-professional life, and feel that they need to forge a new identity image through CVT.

- ***Flexibility*** concerns individuals who use CVT as means of access to new professional opportunities.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the analysis conducted above in this paper concerning the performance of CVT system during the last three decades, it is important to underline the following interdependent concluding points:

First, working individuals' access to socio-professional promotion through CVT induced mobility has, on the whole, undergone an important decline since its introduction in the early 70s. This is basically due to :

- The direct effect of an overall drop in the CVT induced *promotional mobility* which is well known for its strong positive link with socio-*professional promotion* (such as access to a higher socio-professional status, including its implications for improved working conditions and increased responsibility, qualifications and wages). This is basically the result of an accentuated drop of the hierarchical upward mobility induced, especially by the employer-directed CVT. This decline seems to affect more qualified and highly qualified CVT beneficiaries;
- The counter-effect of a relative increase in CVT induced horizontal (known for its low link with socio-professional promotion) during the same period mainly due to the important contribution of the employee-self-initiated and directed CVT. This tendency coincides well with the general move towards the development of more flat organisational structures within the firms.

Secondly, the effect of the concomitant change in the dynamics of work and CVT related identity formation processes, leading to the development, during the same period, of a variety atomised vocational identities, which can be grouped into two basic categories:

- Identities with low level of interactivity with work and related CVT, which have undergone the following basic transformations:
  - The erosion of the traditional "fusion" type of vocational identity, has led to the emergence of small scattered communities in which working individuals' career trajectories are discontinuous or blocked. (i.e. the development of blockage identities);
  - The transformation of the late 60s model of identities (the traditional "retreat" model), which was allowing workers to combine voluntarily work with other types of life (family life, for instance), into a variety of more exclusion-based identities
- Identities characterised by their high level of interactivity with work and their ability to adapt and internalise change. They are basically represented by the following models:
  - The "affinities-mobility" model of vocational identity, in which individuals are more able to adapt their projects to the new flexibility-based mode of human resource management (within organisations with highly reduced pyramidal organisational structures and less promotional opportunities). Within this kind of models, individuals are more inclined to use the CVT (especially SD-CVT) to promote their functional flexibility and mobility through the development of well diversified portfolios of competencies;
  - The "negotiators-entrepreneurial" model of vocational identities whose members possess and develop the competencies which allow them to invest into change and be at the same time well integrated within the organisation. Individuals' access to socio-professional through CVT induced promotional mobility is usually high within this type of vocational identity.

Thirdly, the performance of the CVT system in terms of its contribution to its beneficiaries socio-professional promotion, can still be improved through adapting it to take into consideration the new contextual dimensions of change, especially those related to the dynamics of identity formation processes, by:

- Integrating the two components of the CVT system, especially in terms of complementarity-based learning path fluidity, which takes into consideration the dominant characteristics specific to each component. The SD-CVT sub-system is generally characterised by its contribution to the development of the individuals' transversal competencies and functional flexibility/mobility. As for ED-CVT sub-system, it is basically limited to the adaptation of employees to punctual and specific occupational competencies.(cf. M Dif, 1999a);
- Promoting CVT induced functional flexibility/mobility through the flexibilisation of competencies, learning processes and pathways (cf. Dif, 1999a):
  - *Competency flexibility* is usually obtained through the development of transversal competencies (i.e. core or key skills), which allow the individual to perform a wide range of work roles and respond easily to any new work organisation. They have the advantage of empowering individuals in shaping technology, managing their own learning and transferring acquired skills to work complex situations. They are tacitly a combination of four interrelated dimensions: methodological, social, technical, and behavioural competencies
  - *Curricular flexibility* (or transversal modularization) is considered as one of the major instruments used to implement and develop transversal competencies. Its flexibilisation has to be:
    - Over time, in order to promote CVT system capacity to update its curricular contents in response to changing skills needs;
    - Across individuals by tailoring CVT programmes to take into consideration individual choices and meet specific needs of a certain category of learners, especially those who are in disadvantaged situations;
    - Over space in order to develop CVT capacity to adapt curricular contents to local labour market and local circumstances.
  - *Learning-path/process flexibility. Learning path flexibility* refers to the development of fluid learning tracks through the promotion of an equal chance for access to CVT and smother transferability between different levels and routes of learning. The latter has the advantage of contributing to the integration within and between CVT system initial education (general and vocational). As for the *process flexibility*, it concerns the development of CVT ability to adapt its provision to meet the learning needs of individuals and groups by using different delivery methods and techniques. This has to be:
    - At different times to take into consideration the learners' availability and their particular social and working conditions;
    - Within different institutions and bodies in order to promote collaboration between different CVT providers and employers.
- Creating a real mix between learning and work via the promotion of alternating vocational training, apprenticeship and continuing accreditation of work-based learning;
- Establishing more comprehensive and active socio-vocational inclusion programmes, based on an effective accompaniment and continuing follow up, especially for those individuals with involuntary low interactivity with work.

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